

NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF SMFS

As the academic year winds down, I think the Society for Medieval Feminist Scholarship can boast of several major accomplishments. First of all, we have a new institutional home: Minot State University in North Dakota, under the leadership of Michelle M. Sauer of the English Department. As of July 1, 2004, Michelle will serve as Managing Editor of *Medieval Feminist Forum* and will also assume responsibility for keeping track of SMFS membership. The administration of Minot State has been enthusiastic and generous in their support for taking over the nuts and bolts of managing SMSF and *MFF*. If you would like to send congratulations, good wishes, or advice to Michelle, her email address is michelle.sauer@minotstateu.edu.

At Kalamazoo this year, we had four fantastically successful sessions on women, money and power. It is clear that that concatenation of subjects attracts feminist scholars from many fields. On the other hand, our session on women in the Islamic world suffered from three cancellations out of four scheduled speakers! The session went forward and generated a good discussion, but left us pondering how we can move with greater success into feminist comparative cultural studies. As always, your thoughts and advice are welcome.

Our business meeting and reception this year included a ceremony to award the first bi-annual SMFS First Book Prize. The Book Prize Committee (Monica Green, Ann Matter, Sara Poor, Ulrike Wiethaus) had sixteen wonderful submissions and a very difficult decision to make. The prize went to Jennifer Summit for *Lost Property: The Woman Writer and English Literary History, 1380-1589* (Chicago, 2000), with two Honorable Mention awards to Maud Burnett McInerney for *Eloquent Virgins from Thecla to Joan of Arc* (NY: Palgrave Press 2003), and Lisa Perfetti, *Women and Laughter in Medieval Comic Literature* (U Michigan, 2003). Congratulations to Jennifer, Maud and Lisa! In 2005 we will give the first bi-annual Best Article Prize, so I call your attention to the announcement in this issue of *MFF*.

Best wishes for a restful and creative summer.

—E. Ann Matter

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Sometimes it is the return of the already expressed, not the repressed. "The trouble with Gloria Steinem and second-wave feminists," said one younger woman historian I heard in a recent symposium, "is that they don't realize that it is not gender but class and race that are basic third-wave struggles." With (I admit) a certain asperity, I was almost provoked to respond that a close reading of *Ms. Magazine* from its inception would provide an antidote to this view, until I realized that we feminists are always confronting our struggles anew—as if they are brand new—precisely because they remain such unresolved raw nerves for our cultures. In the last two years, *MFF* has published two roundtable segments on our feminist affiliations and agendas:

"Are you still deciding whether to be a Feminist or a Medievalist?" in *MFF* 36 (Fall 2003), and "Are We Post-Feminist Yet?" in *MFF* 34 (Fall, 2002). Based on the *MFF* discussion, historian Susan Morrison asked her students to think about issues of feminism in the presentation of women's history, and we've included her report on that experience here. She's made terrific use of the resources that *MFF* hopes to provide. "Click," as *Ms. Magazine* says.

Sometimes it is the return of the expressed, redux. "Why do feminists keep working on the same famous female figures when there are so many other-wise unknown women to highlight?" said one participant in the SMFS MLA panel last December. Can't we do both? How much do we actually know with certainty about those we think we know well? Our Roundtable in this issue highlights the well-known but continually elusive Eleanor of Aquitaine. Every year at the Kalamazoo conference, SMFS sponsors a film viewing and panel. The 2003 session on *The Lion in Winter* and Eleanor was especially lively since it interrogated the film as one in a long continuum of interpretations of Eleanor (Tolhurst), a figure whom it is important to "un-know" (DeAragon). To know her and other medieval women and to re-situate history in a feminist matrix, it is essential that we return to the archives (Berman). "Click."

—Bonnie Wheeler

MESSAGE FROM THE OUTGOING MANAGING EDITOR

With this last editor's message I would like to thank the Center for the Study of Women in Society at the University of Oregon for welcoming, redesigning, nurturing, and supporting the *MFF* since 1996. CSWS has done sterling work for women in the humanities and social sciences, and in 2001 it extended its initial five-year commitment to *MFF* to eight years. A great many thanks are due to Jan Emerson, whose work maintaining the database, answering inquiries, filling orders, and dealing with all the day to day work of *MFF* has been stellar, and gone above and beyond the call of love and duty; to Stephanie Wood of the Wired Humanities Project, who maintains the SMFS web site; to Terry Duffy and Lori Howard of University Publications, who have done design and layout on *MFF* since 1996; and to the SMFS colleagues such as Barbara Altmann who have been pinch-hitting, sometimes for extended periods, on *MFF*. Most especially, however, thanks are due to Judith Musick, director of the Feminist Humanities Project of CSWS, who cultivated *MFF* and made it possible to keep producing the journal here long past the arrival of hard budgetary times. Finally, the Giustina Family Fund for Italian Language and Literature has been generous in lean years.

This month, the files, subscriber database, back issues, and all the concrete objects and business associated with *MFF* will be sent off to Minot State University. Please allow for a summer's transition time and learning curve, and persevere if your inquiries aren't answered at once: at both UO and MSU we will try to keep the move from being too disruptive, but some chaos is inevitable.

In bocca al lupo, Michelle! And to the subscribers, *tante belle cose*.

—Gina Psaki